

Activity: Threatened and Endangered Species Management

SUBACTIVITY SUMMARY (\$000)

	2002 Actual Amount	2003 Estimate Amount	Uncontrollable & Related Changes (+/-) Amount	Program Changes (+/-) Amount	2004 Budget Request Amount	Inc(+) Dec(-) from 2003 Amount
\$(000)	21,591	21,288	+177	+366	21,831	+543
FTE	191	185	0	+2	187	+2

2004 PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The 2004 budget request for the Threatened and Endangered Species Management program is \$21,831,000 and 187 FTE.

The Threatened and Endangered Species Management activity supports the Resource Protection mission goal from the Department's Draft Strategic Plan by sustaining biological communities on BLM-managed and influenced lands and waters. Key intermediate outcome measures of performance include increasing acres and stream-miles restored or enhanced to achieve habitat conditions consistent with management plans, program objectives, and consistent with applicable requirements (see the Threatened and Endangered Species Performance Summary at the end of this subactivity discussion).

The BLM manages 262 million acres of public land, primarily located in 12 western states, that are known to contain at least 306 federally listed or proposed species and over 1500 BLM-defined sensitive species. BLM lands provide diverse habitat for wildlife, fish, and plants, ranging from arctic tundra to isolated desert springs harboring populations of rare species. These diverse BLM lands contain rare plants and animals as well as native plant communities of significant national value. The major thrust of the Threatened and Endangered Species Management activity is to ensure that the BLM meets its obligation under Section 7(a) (1) and Section 7(a) (2) of the Endangered Species Act. This entails activities that protect and enhance special status species and their habitats, such as inventorying and monitoring; developing broad scale conservation strategies or implementing recovery plan tasks, as well as screening BLM actions to determine whether it is necessary to initiate a Section 7 consultation.

The Threatened and Endangered Species Management activity supports and ensures the timely implementation of all BLM land use activities and programs such as oil and gas, recreation, timber and vegetation management, fire risk reduction programs, land use planning, livestock grazing, and a variety of other actions in a manner that furthers the BLM multiple use mandate as well as the conservation objectives of the Endangered Species Act and the BLM Manual.

BLM lands support 306 federally listed species, more than any other Federal agency. These lands are particularly critical for endangered species such as the Sonoran pronghorn antelope, which is unique to the Sonoran Desert of North America and currently exists in only three sub-populations: two in Sonora, Mexico and one in Arizona. The Arizona population has experienced a substantial decline from an estimated 150 pronghorn in 1998 to less than 35 pronghorn in 2002. BLM lands provide the best opportunity for Sonoran pronghorn antelope recovery actions in the United States.



BLM land provides the best opportunity for Sonoran pronghorn antelope recovery actions in the United States.

the black-footed ferret.

The Threatened and Endangered Species Management activity works cooperatively with State fish and wildlife agencies, State heritage programs, commodity and environmental groups, other Federal agencies, and non-government organizations to protect and enhance special status species on BLM-managed land. The cooperative work of many partners working to recover the black-footed ferret is an excellent example of an endangered species on the brink of extinction whose recovery is only possible through the concerted efforts of many partners. BLM lands and management activities are playing a significant role in the recovery program of



Since 1998, the Little Snake Field Office in Colorado has successfully operated a breeding and pre-conditioning site for the black-footed ferret as part of its recovery program.

Specific program priorities for 2004 include:

In 2004, the Threatened and Endangered Species Management program will provide technical and policy support to State and field offices preparing statewide Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Plans, as well as support on-going implementation of national program specific actions.

During 2004, the Bureau will support habitat restoration projects in several States such as the following:

- The sagebrush ecosystem in the Gunnison Valley, Colorado provides critical habitat for the Gunnison sage grouse. Fifty acres of sagebrush will be brush-mowed to create better nesting and early brooding habitat by increasing the grass and forb understory. The Colorado Division of Wildlife will partner with the BLM.
- In Idaho, populations of the southern Idaho ground squirrel have declined in recent years, resulting in the FWS naming the species as a candidate for Federal listing as threatened or endangered. Up to 500 acres will be treated in 2004 to reduce competition of annual grasses and weeds with native perennial species and forbs. This project will restore ground squirrel habitat and allow the species to expand populations.

- Montana BLM will work collaboratively with North Dakota Game and Fish to inventory 6,000 acres of BLM-managed sagebrush habitat in North Dakota. Inventory information will help managers to establish long-term goals for restoring this important sage grouse habitat.
- The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, New Mexico State Lands Department, New Mexico Heritage program and the U.S. Forest Service will work cooperatively with the BLM to treat 250 acres of mesquite and other invasive brush species from grassland habitats within the Chihuahuan Desert. This work will implement the New Mexico Black-tailed Prairie Dog Conservation and Management Strategy.
- The Utah prairie dog is federally listed as a threatened species. In 2004, five hundred acres of habitat will be mechanically treated and interseeded with native seed. Not only will this project benefit the Utah prairie dog, but other prairie dog species, black-footed ferret, and livestock. This project is supported by many Federal, State, and non-Federal partners.

Seeds of Success – In 2004, BLM plans to significantly increase testing and development work on new species and increase seed collection and production for this \$10 million program.

Royal Botanic Garden, Kew - BLM plans to send 300 collections to the Royal Botanic Garden, Kew and collect seed of 300 additional plant populations for restoration work. BLM will inventory 300,000 acres to document locations of restoration source materials; train 30 more people in collection techniques; and increase the number of grower contracts from 2003 levels by at least 10%.

2002 PROGRAM PERFORMANCE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Severe fire and drought during 2002 resulted in the need to shift several program priorities. For example, fewer acres of shrub, grasslands, and juniper woodlands were inventoried because emphasis was shifted to shrub and grassland vegetation treatments, as well as monitoring terrestrial habitat. Likewise, fewer lake and wetland treatments were completed; however, there was a significant increase in the acres of lake and wetlands monitored. The increase in monitoring of terrestrial habitats was an unplanned accomplishment due to increased efficiencies using technologies such as GIS data. Additionally, there was an increase in implementation of recovery plan and conservation strategy activities, which is an unplanned accomplishment. However, there was a decrease in the number of recovery plans that were prepared. Recovery plans are a demand item based on FWS's priorities.

In 2002, the major accomplishments in the Threatened and Endangered Species Management program included the following:

Conservation Planning – During 2002, the BLM was a key player in projects critical to conserving several special status species. To this end, the BLM cooperated with diverse stakeholders including Federal and State agencies, academic institutions, environmental organizations, ranchers, and private citizens to accomplish conservation goals for sage grouse

(candidate for listing), black-tailed prairie dogs (candidate for listing), and numerous listed threatened and endangered species.

- California BLM participated extensively in the development of the Nevada Governor's Sage Grouse Conservation Strategy, cooperating with the Nevada Department of Wildlife, the California Department of Fish and Game, and BLM districts in Nevada. California BLM has direct responsibility for on-the-ground management of two sage grouse population units located entirely in Nevada and three units that span the California-Nevada border. Cooperating agencies are working with stakeholder teams that include ranchers, university personnel, State agencies, environmental organizations, and private citizens. The local groups have made significant progress toward completing the strategy planning. The Nevada Governor's groups have completed risk assessments for all population units and have draft conservation plan narratives, including conservation recommendations for two of the units. Once completed, they will be compiled into a statewide strategy designed to provide FWS with enough information that listing sage grouse throughout the western States will not be warranted.
- The BLM has been a key player in the development and implementation of the interagency black-tailed prairie dog conservation and management plan for New Mexico. This effort includes all agencies involved in the management of the black-tailed prairie dog or their habitat, as well as private organizations and academic personnel.
- The Oregon/Washington BLM supported the conservation of 900 species that range from federally listed species to rare species, and their associated habitat on BLM land in Oregon and Washington. The BLM was involved in the development, implementation and support of over 50 recovery plans, conservation strategies, agreements and management requirements for a wide array of species.

Consultation – In 2002, the BLM continued to implement backlog consultations for land use plans and completed many Section 7 consultations for project specific activities. The agency also conducted extensive monitoring programs for the protection of threatened and endangered species.

- In Idaho, the BLM inventoried 80,000 acres for slickspot peppergrass, a federally proposed species, monitored 12 allotments, and worked closely with FWS to develop a management framework document and effects analysis matrix to facilitate Section 7 conference and consultation.
- In Wyoming, the streamlining consultation team worked very effectively to develop a statewide strategy to address the Section 7 consultation workload associated with land use plans. The team's effort benefited numerous activities, including fuels reduction projects, oil and gas drilling, coalbed methane wells, and recreation and grazing-related activities. For example, Wyoming BLM biologists were instrumental in completing Section 7 consultation on more than 4,500 projects, including over 2,800 applications for permit to drill. Additionally, with the assistance of threatened and endangered species staff, Wyoming BLM completed the largest energy-related EIS for the Powder River Basin, which encompasses 8 million acres.

Restoration –

- **Seeds of Success** - In compliance with Congressional Direction in 2002, BLM is participating in the development of an interagency long-term program to supply and manage native plant materials for use in restoration and rehabilitation efforts on Federal lands. BLM dedicated \$5 million to this program to support native plant production and development facilities, public and private partnerships, and education and outreach. The development of new plant materials requires several years of testing and evaluation in order to determine their biological characteristics and cultural techniques. Seed increase projects alone may require several years before a sufficient amount of seed of any given species is produced to meet the needs of more than a small restoration project.
- **Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew** - As part of the BLM MOU with Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew in Great Britain, the RBG funded a coordinator in BLM in 2002 to develop the Seeds of Success program in the U.S. The program focus is on collecting seeds of species needed to restore public lands. In 2002, BLM collected seeds from 439 native plant populations, most of them from the Great Basin and surrounding areas in Utah, California, and Idaho. They include forb species that are important food sources for sage grouse as well as shrub and grass species that provide native habitat components. Three hundred and twenty-five of these seed collections were sent to the RBG, Kew, Great Britain, to undergo testing on seed quality and germination requirements. 114 samples have been cleaned in the U.S. through a partnership with the U.S. Forest Service Region 6 Seed Extractory in Bend, Oregon and are in short-term storage there until they can be multiplied through contracts with local seed growers. Through this agreement with RBG, BLM plans to collect seeds of 2,000 native plant species over the next nine years to significantly expand the knowledge base on how to be successful at native plant restoration.

Recovery – Implementation of conservation or recovery plans can reduce or eliminate the need for listing, and can ultimately reduce ESA related costs over the long term.

- In Arizona, endangered desert pupfish were stocked into Lousy Canyon, a tributary of the Agua Fria River in the Agua Fria National Monument. This was a cooperative effort of Arizona Game and Fish Department, BLM, and the FWS. Six months after the pupfish stocking, both the endangered Gila topminnows and the desert pupfish were observed in breeding colors. Observations indicate that the pupfish have dispersed at least 30 meters downstream of their stocking location. Restocking of native fish such as desert pupfish and Gila topminnow is the primary recovery method outlined in the recovery plans.
- In Colorado, long-term monitoring studies are being conducted on one federally listed endangered plant (*Astragalus osterhoutii*) and two Bureau sensitive rare plants (*Astragalus microcymbus* and *Penstemon harringtonii*). Glenwood Springs and Grand Junction field offices monitored 10 populations of the threatened Uinta Basin hookless cactus to determine population trends.
- At Lathrop Bayou, in Florida, the discovery of endangered red-cockaded woodpeckers has served as a catalyst among several Federal agencies and private partners to manage for the woodpecker, ten special status plants, and bald eagles. An MOU was signed in 2002

addressing cooperative burns, monitoring, and habitat improvements on this 540 acre collection of islands managed cooperatively by BLM and private landowners.

- The first reintroduction of the black-footed ferret on BLM lands in Montana was accomplished in 2002 with follow-up release of additional animals planned in 2003. Additionally, an implementation plan was developed and efforts were initiated to prepare the necessary documentation for updating Section 7 consultation requirements on all land use plans for BLM Montana and the Dakotas.

2003 PROGRAM PERFORMANCE ESTIMATES

The following are examples of collaborative and cooperative management activities and projects that will continue to be funded in threatened and endangered species management program.

Conservation Planning - The Threatened and Endangered Species Management program will continue to work cooperatively with The Nature Conservancy and NatureServe on large scale eco-regional conservation planning. Development of multi-species conservation plans for various eco-regions, such as the sagebrush and prairie grasslands, and incorporation of these conservation plans into land use plans will assist in recovery and conservation for all species and allow for continued multiple uses on public land.

- The development of a BLM national Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Strategy will be a top priority in 2003, to minimize conflicts, reduce threats to sage grouse, and to ensure conservation of the species on BLM lands. There are currently 6 petitions to list sage grouse or specific populations of sage grouse before the FWS. The goal of the BLM strategy is to have sufficient conservation plans in place to prevent the need to list the sage grouse under the Endangered Species Act. BLM manages over 50 percent of all sage grouse habitat.

Consultation - The Bureau will continue to address its Endangered Species Act Section 7 backlog for land use plans. The ESA Section 7 consultation needs were collected and analyzed, which led to the development of the Consultation Assistance Team, composed of staff from FWS, National Marine Fisheries Service, and BLM. The team worked with each BLM State Office and their counterparts in the other agencies to develop a statewide interagency strategy to address the backlog consultation issue. The BLM will be implementing these strategies throughout 2003.

- Colorado is contracting to have statewide species Biological Assessments completed. Also, Colorado has established a Level 1 streamlining consultation team, which will review all the Biological Assessments, as required of action agencies under the ESA. The team will handle lynx and other species.
- Southwest (Arizona and New Mexico) and Intermountain West (Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, Montana, and Washington) BLM offices are coordinating regionally on species assessments.

- Utah BLM has hired a contractor who is working on development of Biological Assessments. Utah BLM continues to partner with many agencies on conservation, recovery, and species assessments.
- In 2003, interns will be placed in twenty offices to assist with various aspects of work related to the backlog consultation on land use plans, including inventorying, monitoring, writing Biological Assessments, or conducting species assessments. This program has been very successful in helping BLM meet its responsibilities under the Endangered Species Act.

Restoration –

- **Seeds of Success** - BLM plans to continue established projects in 2003 and expand partnerships with local businesses to grow native seed collected in the Seeds of Success program. The BLM will direct \$6 million to this program in 2003.
- **Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Great Britain** - BLM's goal is to send 400 more new species to the RBG, Kew in 2003 and to collect seeds from 200 plant populations for restoration work. BLM field offices will inventory 400,000 acres and monitor plant phenology to make these collections. The BLM will also increase the number of local seed growing contracts with local businesses by 10 percent. BLM expects to train at least 50 more employees and partners in 2003 to collect seeds according to the established protocols.

JUSTIFICATION OF 2004 PROGRAM CHANGES

2004 PROGRAM CHANGES

	2004 Budget Request	Program Changes (+/-)
\$(000)	21,831	+366
FTE	187	+2

The 2004 budget request for Threatened and Endangered Species Management program is \$21,831,000 and 187 FTE, a program change of +\$366,000 and +2 FTE from the 2003 requested level.

Threatened and Endangered Species, (+\$350,000) – Increased funding will help the BLM to support the Resource Protection mission goal in the Department's Draft Strategic Plan. By implementing conservation and recovery plans, the Bureau will increase the percent of species of management concern that are managed to self-sustaining levels. Additionally, implementation of these actions can reduce or eliminate the need for listing, and can ultimately reduce ESA-related costs over the long term. This will be especially important with the anticipated increase in uses on public land, such as oil and gas development, fuels reduction activities, and recreation use. Projects that are expected to be completed include:

- In Arizona, fence and cattle guards will be constructed and installed in the Waterman Mountain Area of Critical Environmental Concern to prevent destruction of the endangered Turks-head cactus population.
- Colorado BLM will use additional funding to support its breeding program and to supply black-footed ferret kits for reintroduction into the wild. The Colorado black-footed recovery project is a cooperative effort between Federal, State, and local agencies and local citizens in Utah and Colorado.
- Idaho will implement and monitor a screening project on the Little Lost River Flood Control Project. The screening project is attempting to reduce or eliminate the loss of bull trout below the Flood Control Project to keep BLM in compliance with the Biological Opinion.
- Montana will support an internship to assist with the special status species program with a primary focus on efforts that will help reduce the backlog of Section 7 ESA consultation. This is supported by the Chicago Botanical Gardens.
- Increased funding will allow New Mexico BLM to locate roosts of two endangered bat species and evaluate the foraging habitat within the foraging distance of roosts. This study is required as part of a Biological Opinion. This information is necessary for renewing livestock permits.
- In 2004, Oregon BLM will improve a dike system in the Warner Wetlands area to improve management options and reduce management and maintenance costs. Secondly, a pump station will be improved by installing a screen to allow use of the pump without killing fish. Partners include Ducks Unlimited, FWS, The Nature Conservancy, and the Issac Walton League.
- One hundred thousand acres on the Henry Mountains Field Station in Utah will be surveyed for Mexican spotted owls, southwestern willow flycatcher, northern goshawk, peregrine falcon, flammulated and burrowing owls, pygmy rabbits, and sage grouse.

National Landscape Conservation System, (+\$300,000) – The mission of the NLCS is to conserve and manage nationally significant landscapes that have outstanding cultural, ecological, scientific, and social values for the benefit of current and future generations. BLM will use the additional funds requested, in part, to support protection or restoration of habitat that is critical to threatened or endangered species within NLCS units.

- **Agua Fria NM, Arizona** – Native fishes will be reintroduced into suitable habitats throughout the Agua Fria watershed. This project will help meet the BLM's obligation to recover endangered species and conserve biological diversity on public lands.
- **Ironwood Forest NM, Arizona** – Surveys for cactus ferruginous pygmy owls will be completed in the Ironwood Forest NM as part of a conservation agreement with the FWS. In addition, populations of southwest willow flycatchers will be surveyed along the Gila River, and native fishes of Martinez and Mineral Creeks will be monitored.

- ***Las Cienegas NCA, Arizona*** - In Arizona, the implementation of the Las Cienegas National Conservation Area Resource Management Plan will benefit special status species through hiring five new full-time positions for the purpose of restoring upland, riparian, and wildlife resources. The additional staff will also support scientific research and conduct ecological monitoring programs. Las Cienegas is important to several special status species. Three rare native fish, the Endangered Gila topminnow, the Gila Chub, and the Longfin dace are endemic to Cienega Creek. This project will be supported by multiple subactivities.
- ***Vermillion Cliffs NM, Arizona*** - The Vermillion Cliffs National Monument was designated by Presidential Proclamation on November 9, 2000. The National Monument is being managed as a showcase for best management practices. Increased funding will be used to implement special status species recovery and conservation actions for the condor.
- ***Carrizo Plain NA, California*** - In California, the Carrizo Plain Natural Area is adjacent to a very important region for many endangered, threatened and rare species such as the San Joaquin kit fox, blunt-nosed leopard lizard, giant kangaroo rat, and San Joaquin antelope squirrel. It is known to support the threatened or endangered California jewelflower, Hoover's wooly-star and San Joaquin wooly-threads. In addition, the CPNA contains habitat for California condors, pronghorn antelope, tule elk, sandhill cranes, and mountain plovers and a wide variety of raptor species also use the area for nesting, foraging and wintering. Surveys are required to identify the presence of and provide support for the conservation of special status species under the Endangered Species Act.

Information Technology, (-\$284,000) - The Department and BLM are undertaking significant information technology reforms to: improve the management of IT investments, enhance the security of IT systems and information, and realize short and long-term efficiencies and savings. The Department is taking a corporate approach that will include consolidated purchases of hardware and software, consolidation of support functions including helpdesks, email support, web services, and training. Savings will be possible by reducing, but not eliminating, IT support services at Bureau field offices and consolidating these services at the national level.

Reductions to specific BLM IT systems are also proposed. These reductions are possible because of deferring or canceling system enhancements on the Management Information System; the Federal Human Resource Information System; the Smart Card program; the Corporate Metadata Repository; the IT Enterprise Information Portal; LAWNET, which tracks law enforcement incidents and responses; Tivoli, a management tool that permits updates of software from remote locations; and Nobility, which standardizes the Bureau's efforts to automate the NEPA process.

THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE SUMMARY**DOI Strategic Goal: Resource Protection**

End Outcome Goal: Sustain biological communities on DOI managed and influenced lands and waters in a manner consistent with obligations regarding the allotment and use of water.

End Outcome Measures:	2001 Actual	2002 Plan	2002 Actual	2003 Plan	2004 Proposed	Change in Performance (2003 to 2004)
Percent of species of management concern that are managed to self-sustaining levels, in cooperation with affected States and others, as defined in approved management plans.	Not Measured	Not Measured	Not Measured	Establish Baseline	Establish Initial Target	N/A
Percent of threatened or endangered species listed a decade or more that are stabilized or improved.	Not Measured	Not Measured	Not Measured	Establish Baseline	Establish Initial Target	N/A
Percent of candidate species where listing is unnecessary as a result of conservation actions or agreements.	Not Measured	Not Measured	Not Measured	Establish Baseline	Establish Initial Target	N/A

Intermediate Outcome Goal 1: Create habitat conditions for biological communities to flourish.

Intermediate Outcome Measures:	2001 Actual	2002 Plan	2002 Actual	2003 Plan	2004 Proposed	Change in Performance (2003 to 2004)
Habitat Restoration: Acres and stream miles restored or enhanced to achieve habitat conditions consistent with management plans, program objectives, and consistent with applicable substantive and procedural requirements of State and Federal water law:						
Miles	714	610	610	630	650	+20
Acres	13,800	9,500	6,350	9,500	9,500	+0

Intermediate Outcome Goal 3: Improve information and assessments for decision-making.

Intermediate Outcome Measures:	2001 Actual	2002 Plan	2002 Actual	2003 Plan	2004 Proposed	Change in Performance (2003 to 2004)
Management Plans: Percent of acres of BLM lands and waters with current resource management plans in place that include condition objectives for biological communities. (BLM Measure)	Not Measured	Not Measured	Not Measured	Establish Baseline	Establish Initial Target	N/A
Status and Trends: Percent of populations managed or influenced by DOI for which current condition (e.g., quality/quantity) and trend is known.	Not Measured	Not Measured	Not Measured	Establish Baseline	Establish Initial Target	N/A

THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

Primary Outputs funded by this subactivity:	2001 Actual	2002 Plan	2002 Actual	2003 Plan	2004 Proposed	Change in Performance (2003 to 2004)
Inventory water resources (number).	0	35	35	25	25	+0
Inventory Shrub/Grasslands/PJ (acres).	50,000	3,124,000	1,036,000	1,400,000	1,300,000	-100,000
Inventory Streams/Riparian Areas (miles).	85	50	65	100	100	+0
Assess priority subbasins/regions (acres).	0	9,000	9,000	0	0	+0
Inventory Wildlife/Plant Habitat (acres).	3,000,000	2,467,000	2,680,000	2,680,000	2,700,000	+20,000
Prepare T&E Species Recovery Plans (number).	9	9	8	23	24	+1
Apply Shrub/Grassland Vegetation Treatments (acres).	71,000	12,000	33,600	40,000		-40,000
Construct Shrub, Grassland, Woodland, Forest Projects (number).	45	10	10	10	10	+0
Maintain Shrub, Grassland, Woodland, Forest Projects (number).	70	25	25	10	70	+60
Apply Lake/Wetland Treatments (acres).	5,100	200	160	250	250	+0
Apply Stream/Riparian Treatments (miles).	40	25	30	65	65	+0
Construct Lake/Wetland/Stream/Riparian Projects (number).	10	10	15	10	10	+0
Maintain Lake/Wetland/Stream/Riparian Projects (number).	35	10	15	10	10	+0
Implement Species Recovery/Conservation Actions (number).	265	300	480	400	450	+50
Monitor Lake/Wetland Habitat (acres).	400	200	5,150	4,000	4,000	+0
Monitor Stream/Riparian Habitat (miles).	300	470	550	250	250	+0
Monitor water resources (number).	0	20	20	0	0	+0
Monitor Shrub/Grassland Vegetation Treatments (acres).	3,600	14,000	15,000	25,000	25,000	+0
Monitor Terrestrial Habitat (acres).	3,610,000	3,453,000	6,786,000	5,000,000	5,100,000	+100,000
Monitor Species Populations (number).	1,900	1,640	2,250	2,600	2,700	+100